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Report : Memorial of R. McKee

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Recommended Citation

S. Rep. No. 282, 36th Cong. 1st Sess. (1860)

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JUNE 19, 1860.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. SEBASTIAN made the following

REPORT.

[To accompany bill S. 514.]

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred the memorial of Redick McKey, having considered the same, report :

That said McKey was appointed, in 1850, one of three commissioners to negotiate treaties and preserve peace with the Indians in California, and was, in addition, made the disbursing agent of all the moneys appropriated by Congress for that purpose. His duties embraced not only his own official disbursements, but also those of his colleagues, Barbour and Wozencraft. These duties were not only arduous and responsible, but were, amidst great difficulties and embarrassments, performed with integrity and fidelity. From the known condition of the Indians at that time, the necessity of preserving peace and averting a war of extermination—imminent, and even in progress—it was necessary, with the small and inadequate measures at his disposal, often to incur expenditures not within the sanction of the strict and technical rules observed by the Indian Office. This necessity was apparent, so much so that Congress passed an act for the relief of Dr. O. M. Wozencraft, one of his colleagues, by extending to his accounts the benefit of a settlement “upon principles of equity and justice.” The committee think that memorialist is justly entitled to the same indulgence—the more so, as nothing can be paid him, according to the proposed resolution, except what he has actually disbursed for the benefit of the public service.

From an examination of an elaborate statement of his accounts by the Indian Office, it appears that the balance claimed by him against the United States is \$9,308 99. Of this sum, \$4,464 35 consists of items, which, under the rules of the office, could not be allowed “upon principles of equity and justice.” The balance thus left is \$4,844 64, consisting of charges which are, in their character, just and equitable, and, with the necessary explanations, should be allowed. The committee, therefore, report the accompanying bill.